

"Transcend the Ordinary"

Kislev 5782 - Adar 1 5782
December 2021- February 2022

Words from the SZ Solar Dedication

By DEBORAH LEVY, chair, SZ's Climate Action Committee

We are now powering our beit mikdash - our sacred home - with the light of the sun. When we return to pre-pandemic use of our building, we estimate that our solar panels will cover 95-97% of our energy use.

In addition to the reduced use of resources and reduced impact on the planet, we are doing something else, too.

We are re-centering the environment in our Jewish ethos; reminding ourselves, as Jews, of our inter-connectedness with our planet.

We Jews were once a people of the land - Judaism was born in a society that was deeply connected to the land and nature's cycles. We became a people of the book when we had to leave our land, and many of our

holidays developed to help us hold on to those cycles.

And yet, those cycles and the natural processes and resources on which they depend are not always present in our current Jewish hearts and minds and practice.

There are many Jewish voices rising today to bring the natural world back into our Jewish practice and worldview and, led by our inspired rabbi and our Climate Action Committee, SZ is one of those voices.

By prioritizing this shift to renewable energy, we are re-strengthening our connection, as a Jewish community, to our natural world and to the here-and-now climate crisis.

I hope that our new solar panels will bring light not just to our building, but to the urgency of the climate threat that confronts us, and how we at Sha'ar Zahav can speak up, make changes and take action. Today's climate emergency means that enormous societal changes must take place immediately to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets by 2030.

The health of our planet must become central to our lives, as Jews and as human beings. Our new photo-voltaic system is a small but important step.

"Judaism was born in
a society that was deeply
connected to the land."

**IRA Investment
Strategies** pg. 5

THIS ISSUE: Rabbi's Message / President's Message / Reader Survey / Donations / & More

Our Ever Changing Pandemic Landscape

By RABBI MYCHAL COPELAND



Why did the Israelites have to journey for so long after being freed from slavery?

The great Jewish thinker, the Baal Shem Tov (Besht), answers that when you're traveling and can't pray or study in your usual manner, you must find

other ways to connect. He cautions us to not be distressed by this, because we need to connect to G!d in many different ways.

The Besht goes on to say that this is why the journeys of the Israelites were written in the Torah. To remind us that on the complicated journey through life, we constantly need to adapt; to shift the way we find meaning, pray and be in community.

At SZ, we have indeed been on a journey through this pandemic, and the way we pray, study and build community shifted accordingly. We began Zooming our services and meetings, then began to meet in our backyards, tossed our failings into the Bay at Tashlich, and sang our

hearts out to puppies in the park. And, finally, we are making the move toward in-person and Zoomed Shabbat services at 290 Dolores. This is our journey, and like our ancestors wandering through the desert, we need to mark each step along the way. The journey of fits and starts mirrors what we've been experiencing in our lives since early 2020.

As we figure out what this new way to be in community at SZ might look like, our community needs some helping hands. We want services to be accessible to all, whether at home or in-person, local or many miles away. Our remarkable volunteer tech team has carried us through this phase, but we now need many more members to step in if we are to keep offering a Zoom option.

As we reopen our building, we also need more greeters than ever before to ensure that we are safe. If you are able to assist with either in-person greeting or Zooming from home, please contact our volunteer coordinator extraordinaire, Sara Haber (sara.fay.haber@gmail.com).

Where will this new leg of our journey take us? We can't yet know, but the power of our community is that we will keep lifting each other up and adapting to what the moment brings us.

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Sha'ar Zahav is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism, the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, California Power & Light, and the San Francisco Interfaith Council

Our Journey to Judaism program is supported by grants from the National Center to Encourage Judaism

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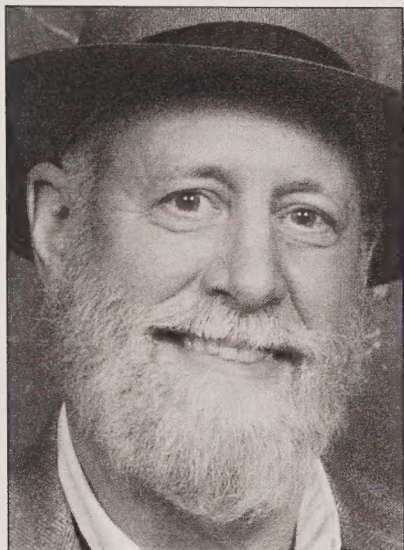
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Joyous Rededication of our Mishkan Dolores

By MARC LIPSCHUTZ



In the winter darkness, Chanukah greets us with bright lights of joyous rededication. The essential Chanukah mitzvah of kindling lights is described in the Talmud:

Have a light kindled by each person and his household. The mehadrin adjust the number of lights daily.

The House of Hillel states: On the first day one kindles one light, and from there on increases. Mehadrin is from the Aramaic word hidur, which means to encompass and court. Mehadrin observe beyond the law with enhanced practice. Hidur mitzvah is Hebrew for beautifying a mitzvah, for example, by using the most attractive ritual items we can afford.

During Chanukah, we all engage in mehadrin observance, by adjusting and increasing the number of lights with the finest chanukiot. During Chanukah, we are all earnestly devout! As our Chanukah lights are increasing, vaccinations for younger children and boosters for adults are becoming prevalent. Accordingly, we can now safely gather indoors for Shabbat

services, adult programs and Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer classes, while vaccinated, masked and distanced.

“We have additionally improved our sanctuary technology to embrace our geographically distanced community.”

We have prepared our mishkan, our communal home, for rededication through our presence, with solar panels, a new roof, refinished floors, additional chairs, enhanced heating and numerous smaller repairs. We have additionally improved our sanctuary technology to embrace our geographically distanced community, and ensure multi-accessibility as requested by you through our survey. The Talmud also reveals the miracle of the little cruse of oil that surpassed all expectations, and reminds us of our unlimited potential.

With gratitude to HaShem, I look forward to reopening Mishkan Dolores with joyous rededication, and to striving together as a kehillah kedoshah, a holy community, to achieve our highest potential.

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JGF is published with a donation from Jan Half.

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not those of Sha'ar Zahav. Proofing errors will
be atoned for each Yom Kippur.

The Jewish Gaily Forward is published four
times a year by Sha'ar Zahav: September,
December, March, and June. The deadline
for submissions is 45 days prior to the
publication date: July 15th, October 15th,
January 15th, and April 15th. All sub-
missions to the JGF must meet editorial
requirements and length requirements.

ADVERTISERS: contact Susie Idzik
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Specifications supplied upon request.

Results from our Member Survey

By MIKE SHRIVER

Ten years ago, SZ member Ruth Bernstein, CEO and president of EMC Research, led an SZ member study. Her team completed a similar research study in 2021. In this survey, members yielded some interesting facts about not just the demographics of our congregation but also the overall satisfaction and connection of our members.

Compared to 10 years ago, Sha'ar Zahav now has:

- Significantly more new members. 25% of our membership is now made up of individuals and families who have been members for 2 years or less;
- Many more members who live outside San Francisco and, in particular, who live outside of the Bay Area;
- More members who identify as Jews by Choice, which is double the amount a decade ago (from 5% to 10%);
- More interfaith households (now almost 40%–); and
- More individuals who identify as straight/non-LGBTQ+ members, an increase from 16% to 23%.

Several key points were very evident in the survey results:

- Most members feel connected to the community, even if they are not very active;

- Members who participated in the survey are overwhelmingly satisfied with the our community;
- Perceptions and ratings have improved significantly compared with 10 years ago especially in the areas of clergy and leadership;
- Sha'ar Zahav is seen as a very welcoming and diverse community, with significant improvement compared to 2011;
- Members gave very positive ratings to how the synagogue operated during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- While many members are looking forward to in-person activities – especially social connections – many want to continue online/Zoom activities as well.

Results from the survey highlighted the fact that we have been listening to and responding to concerns and needs of the congregation in a meaningful and responsible fashion. Our challenge for the next decade is to maintain and strengthen these gains so that our connected community continues to thrive.

We are especially grateful to not just the committee who helped develop the survey but also to Ruth Bernstein, EMC Research and Riley Galvin, without whom the survey would not have happened.

SHA'AR ZAHAV HIGH HOLY DAYS APPRECIATION

Sha'ar Zahav is stronger for the dedicated volunteerism of our members. No place is this more appreciated than in the annual work behind the scenes to produce successful services and High Holy Day programming. In addition to our dedicated clergy, Rabbi Copeland and Cantor Bernstein, staff including Sue Bojdak, Sharon Heath, Andy Schwartz and Susie Idzik and many services leaders; we thank those unseen members: Ron Edelman, Steve Mazer, James Carlson, Sara

Haber, Martin Tannenbaum, Mike Shriver, Tony Harris, Emily Dorian, Ruth Schoenbach, Matt Rich, Larry Wexler, Mike Rosenberg, whose work was invaluable.

The coordination for all of our holiday celebrations takes place in the Ritual Committee. All members are welcome to join and take part in the planning process for our congregation-wide celebrations.

RMDs, QCDs, SZ and You

By MARK MACKLER

"The Hardest Thing in the World is to Understand the Income Tax"

-Albert Einstein

According to the recent SZ membership survey, a substantial number of SZ members are in the vicinity of 70 years of age. If you are in that age group, this information is mostly for you — but everyone should read this to prepare for the future.

If you have been fortunate enough to have stocked away money in an IRA (Individual Retirement Account), federal tax laws have been very, very kind to you. You never had to pay taxes on the money that you contributed, so ideally, you have many years of tax-deferred growth.

But now, the IRS has plans for your money. When you hit 72, you must begin to take Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs). "So what?" you may ask. "It's my money, I worked hard for it, and now I get to spend it." That's great, but every single dollar you take will be taxed as ordinary income.

How much you'll pay annually will depend on how much you have saved and what your life expectancy is. If you fail to take your RMD each year, you will get hit with miserable tax penalties.

So, what's to be done? Back in 2006, Congress, with strong bipartisan support, enacted a law establishing QCDs (Qualified Charitable Donations). Simple explanation: Instead of taking your RMDs, you direct the custodian of your IRA (bank, financial institution, brokerage) to send the RMD (or portions of it) to any qualified charitable institution you designate.

In my case, I directed my money to Friends of San Francisco Animal Care & Control, the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank, Jewish Family and Children's Services, and (of course) Sha'ar Zahav. I benefited because I did not have to pay taxes on the RMD, and the money I donated will not be added to my Adjusted Gross Income (AGI). This brief article is by no means everything you need to know, but I hope it nudges you to start thinking about a tax move which will benefit you and SZ.

SHA'AR ZAHAV MAZEL TOV

Sharon Kubo and Ben Kram

on the birth of Liora Naomi Kram

Ann Daniels and Jonathan Zingman

on the marriage of their daughter
Shira Daniels-Zingman to Hien Nguyen

Amy Kaufman and Victoria Estevez

on the birth of Delio Kibrik Estevez

Nim Grinvald and Larissa Queiroga da Silva

on the birth of Noam Malachi Grinvald da Silva

Arthur Meirson and Thomas Tolerico

on their marriage

Nancy Meyer

on her marriage to Dodici Azpadu

Noa Solomon-Carmel

on her b'mitzvah

Michael O'Rourke and Jeff Hart Cooper

on their marriage

Amelia Stern

on her bat mitzvah

Elias Ramer has a story in a newly published anthology called *Strange Fire: Jewish Voices from the Pandemic*: <https://www.benyehuda-press.com/books/strange-fire/>

Amelia Stern

Amelia was called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah on October 9. It was the first in-shul celebration since the advent of Covid. Many members of her families were there, including her paternal grandparents, her dad Adam, her mom Alisa, and her dad, Jim, all of whom passed her the Torah. Many cousins and friends of Amelia's were there as well. There was fabulous food at Manny's and from Pancho Villa's across the street.

Amelia's bat mitzvah was an utterly community affair. Sue Bodjak, Shelli Rawlings-Fein, and Deborah Levy were the kindest, wisest, and most loving and disciplinarian village members. Marty Rawlings-Fein made sure it was all saved for posterity. Amelia is in 7th grade at Willard Middle School in Berkeley and totally loves it. She does not want to miss a single day. Amelia also loves boba tea and babysitting. She loves the kids and the money.

Amelia loves to eat. This past year, she did a lot of cooking and baking: things like babka, halvah, and different kinds of cookies, all from scratch. This past summer she went away to Eden Village West Jewish camp, with trepidations, but made many fantastic Jewish friends there and cried when she had to come home.



SHA'AR ZAHAV NEW MEMBERS

AUGUST

Julia Deiuliis
Gina Roccanova
and her two children
Brandie Sendziak and Sondra Solovay

SEPTEMBER

Kelly Hensley
Rabbi Yoel Kahn and Dan Bellm
Abi Weissman and Melissa James
and their 3-1/2 year old child Liebe

OCTOBER

Dwyn Asher
Elliott Gillooly
Roderick Llewellyn
Julia Maniccia
Gabriel Rafael
Aditi Ramaswamy
Samantha Smithstein
David Kover and Dagny Dingman
Joelle Pauley-Fine and Steven Fine

AUGUST

- 4 **Nan Johnson**,
friend of Terry Fletcher
- 9 **Shoshana Levenberg**,
member of Sha'ar Zahav
and wife of Andrea Guerra
- 12 **Lynne Hessel**,
mother of Meagan Fox,
mother-in-law of Martin Fox
and grandmother of Josephine and Naomi Fox
- 14 **Aviva Rosenthal**,
friend of Jose Hernandez
- 17 **Natalie Godt**,
mother of Stephanie Godt,
mother-in-law of Ellen Novogrodsky
and grandmother of
Avidan and Chava Novogrodsky-Godt
- 17 **Diane Tannenbaum**,
mother of Robert Tannenbaum
and mother-in-law of Mark Pressler

SEPTEMBER

- 2 **Justin Ezra Frazin**,
nephew of Jim Frazin
- 8 **Alvin Kates**,
father of Bonnie Kates
- 9 **Ruth Miguel**,
former member of Sha'ar Zahav

- 15 **Kathy bat Nosrat v' Nahid**,
cousin of Shawn Matloob
- 17 **Robert Nguyen**,
father of Christopher Nguyen,
father-in-law of Daniel Loftus
and grandfather of Naya Loftus-Nguyen
- 20 **Shirley Kodmur**,
mother of Danny Kodmur
- 23 **Thomas Dragwa**,
grandfather of Thomas Tolerico
- 27 **Nan Lowell**,
aunt of Adam Pollack
- 28 **Edgar Zingman**,
father of Jonathan Zingman,
father-in-law of Ann Daniels
and grandfather of
Shira and Naomi Zingman-Daniels

OCTOBER

- 11, **Paul Mogle**,
uncle of Jacob and Nathan Robinson
- 12 **Annye Bone**,
member of Sha'ar Zahav
and partner of Gereg Jones Muller
- 14 **Aahz Maruch**,
brother of Cantor Sharon Bernstein,
brother-in-law of Francesco Spangolo
and uncle of Ariel Spangolo

SEPTEMBER

- 6 **James Carlson**
in memory of his mother, Jan Tuzzolino
- 13 **Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman**
in honor of Allan Gold's Diamond Birthday
- 14 **Geri Kahn**
in memory of her mother, Sandra Kahn
- 20 **Shawn Matloob**
in memory of his mother
Shanaz Rahel Cohanin Matloob,
and his maternal grandparents,
Mehdi Meir Cohanin and Iran Cohanin

- 24 **Ira Hirschfield**
in memory of his mother, Lois Hirschfield

OCTOBER

- 1 **Lisa Katz**
in memory of her father, Norman Katz
- 8 **James Carlson**
in memory of his grandfathers,
Arthur Carlson & Filippo Tuzzolino
- 9 **Jim Frazin**, flowers
in honor of Amelia Stern's bat mitzvah
- 15 **Paul Cohen**
in memory of his mother, Fay Cohen

General Fund

Allan Berenstein

in memory of Harry Berenstein

Daniel Cezar Prado

in celebration of my conversion to Judaism

James Carlson

in memory of Bob Carlson, Mary Jeanne Carlson,
and Robert Roginski
and in honor of Franco Martinez

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman

in memory of Richard Chaitin, Thomas Dragwa,
Shirley Kodmur, and in celebration of
the marriage of Arthur Meirson and Thomas Tolerico

Ray Cutino

in memory of Michael Reynolds

Karen Greene and Beck Epstein

in memory of Rabbi Meyer Goldberg

Marjorie Hilsenrad

in honor of Larry Wexler

Judith Huerta

in appreciation of Rabbi Copeland
and Cantor Bernstein's leadership
during the pandemic

Clara Jaeckel

Carol Levitin

in memory of Frank Hyman

Ora Prochovnick and Rena Frantz

in memory of Bonnie Ludwig and Lynne Hessel

Norma Rosen

in memory of Y'hudit bat Sarah

Jennifer Schwartz

Jonathan Uytterlinde

Nina Wouk and Jessie Ap'neva

in memory of Fran Barnett and Diana Robbins

Ami Zusman

in honor of Mike Shriver

In Memory of Shoshana Levenberg

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman
Jonathan Funk and John Arnold
Susan Knox and Weldon Ihrig
Stacey Lawson
Richard Meyerson
Karen Schiller
Arthur Slepian and Gerry Llamado
Martin Tilzer and Jeff Piade
Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes
Ami Zusman

In Memory of Edgar Zingman

James Carlson
Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman
Jonathan Funk
Mark Mackler and Wendell Choo

In Honor of Allan Gold's 75th Birthday

Carla Buchanan
Steve Elman and Tom Holt
Ron Lezell
Mark Mackler and Wendell Choo
Karen Schiller

Rainbow 2021

Tom Lakritz

Debra Reabock

in memory of Ray Reabock

Andy Schwartz

Dana Vinicoff

Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes

High Holy Days 5782

Pierre and Yvette Adida

Mahri Bahati

Allan Berenstein

Paul Bendix

Sara Berooff and Evan Richards

Liat Bird and Jake McKibben

Jesse Brown and Alissa Van Nort

Diana Buchbinder and Jeane Redsecker

James Carlson

Paul Cohen and Robert Gutterman

David "Duke" Crestfield

Linda Edelstein and Marion Gillen

Don Fischer

Jonathan Funk

Tamar Gershon

Allan Gold and Alan Ferrera

William Goldstein and Christopher Archuleta

Sara Haber and Beth Sousa

Marjorie Hilsenrad

in honor of Martin Tannenbaum

"for always recognizing the newcomer
and those on the sidelines"

Cindy Icke

Alex Ingersoll and Martin Tannenbaum

Nancy Kates

Erika Katske and Reuben Zellman

Robert Katz

Rose Katz

in memory of Shoshana Levenberg

Benjamin Kram and Sharon Kubo

Mark Leno

Nancy Levin in honor of Sara Haber

Ron Lezell

Hans Lindahl

Daniel Loftus and Christopher Nguyen

High Holy Days 5782 (continued)

Shawn Matloob

Arthur Meirson and Thomas Tolerico

Miriam Menzel and Jim Musselman

Anand Nair and Rebecca Stern

Irene Ogus

Mindy Oppenheim

Carolyn Pines and Judy Schwartz

Harriet Rafter

Rachel and Richard Ralston

Gina Roccanova

Neil Rosenbaum

Shawn Rosenmoss

Jeffrey Rubin and Fran Bush

Karen Schiller

Yolande Schneeman

Andy Schwartz

Brandie Sendziak

Amy Scheffler and Petewr Bershatsky

Ruth Schoenbach and Lynn Eden

Steve Shotland

Erik Sikovitz

Deborah Sommers and Richard Whittow

in celebration of Amelia Sterns' b'mitzvah

Sen Talley

Kelly Thiemann and Ann Bauman

Michael Tyler, Amy Schustack and Scott Kramer

Nancy Wecker

Lonnie Weiss

Larry Wexler

Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes

Susan Wolfson

Nina Wouk and Jessie Ap'neva

Ami Zusman

Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk

Musical Events Fund

Marjorie Hilsenrad

in honor of Jonathan Funk

Ron Lewkowitz

in honor of Jonathan Funk's Kol Nidre chanting

Jonathan Funk

in memory of Annys Bone

Cantor's Discretionary Fund

Melanie Aron

in memory of Janice Levine Aron

and in appreciation of

the Cantor's Tuesday morning minyan

James Carlson

in memory of Shoshana Levenberg

Jonathan Funk and John Arnold

in memory of Aahz Maruch

Marjorie Hilsenrad

in honor of Cantor Bernstein

Sharyn Saslafsky and Jan Half

in memory of Shoshana Levenberg and Aahz Maruch

Christine Witzel and Stephanie Hannaford

in memory of Dan Bernstein

Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes

in appreciation for Ariel Spagnolo's

and Cantor Bernstein's beautiful singing

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Arthur Bernstein

in memory of Larry Bernstein

Stephanie Godt and Ellen Novogrodsky

in memory of Natalie Joy Godt

Tmima and Eli Grinvald

in celebration of the naming

of Noam Malachi Grinvald da Silva

Marjorie Hilsenrad

with gratitude to Rabbi Copeland

"for keeping our spirits up during
difficult times"

Jonathan Pannor

in memory of Richard Chaitin

Annette and Stephen Spector

in memory of Robert Greenberg

Trudi White

in memory of Lorraine White

Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes

in honor of Rabbi Copeland

Social Action Fund

Sharyn Saslafsky and Jan Half

in memory of Edgar Zingman

Juliette Schlesinger

in honor of Judith Wolfe's birthday

on September 29

and her 31st wedding anniversary

to Jennifer Hughes on the same day

Bonnie Wallsh

in memory of Murray Fandal, Mildren Fandal

and Maurice Wallsh

Chai Fund

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman

in memory of Lynne Hessel and Robert Nguyen

Michael Chertok

DECEMBER

Ben Blachman
Allan Craig
David Glassberg
Norman David Kramer
Elijah Michael Silverrod MacLachlan
Phyllis Mintzer
Marilyn O'Keeffe
Walter Palmer
Nicholas Papadopoulos
Gerald (Jerry) Rosenstein

JANUARY

George Ash
Bill Ashley-Dobbin
Jerome Davis
Keith Fenton
Ziggy Gimnicher
Allen Harris
Aaron Nacamulli
Cheryl Orvis
Ephraim Troy
Nathan Eli Weinstein

FEBRUARY

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Seth Charney
Rabbi Jason Gaber
Steven Richter
Jamie Rosen
Barbara Rosenblum
Leland Vogel
Stephen Walters
Ronald Wilmot



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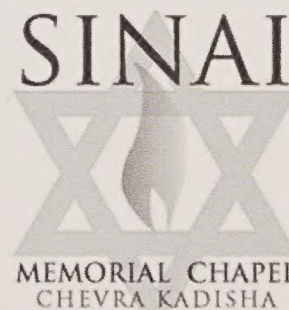
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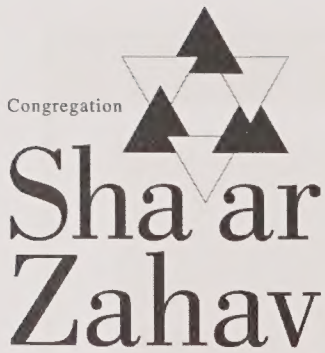
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Chanukah - 5782



Sunday evening, first night candle lighting 11/28 on Zoom:

8 Nights, One Day at a Time

(How the 12-steps Can Help Everyone Have a Meaningful Chanukah)

Tuesday evening, 11/30, 3rd night candle lighting

6:00 pm at Jane Warner Plaza, Castro, Market & 17th street

Spin a giant dreidel, sing, dance and enjoy jelly donuts

(jointly sponsored- with Castro Merchants Association & Castro Community Benefit District)

Thursday evening, 12/2, 5th night candle lighting on Zoom

6:30 - 7:30 pm - Daring to Burn: A Ritual for Abuse Survivors

(with Shalom Bayit)

Friday evening, 12/3, Chanukah Shabbat (Hybrid Service - In person & Zoom)

Shabbat morning, 12/4, Yoga of Rededication at 290 Dolores

(9:00 - 10:00 am) followed by Services

Check weekly e-mails for details.